

Capsules

Supreme Court upholds USCC's subpoena claim

Washington (NC) — On an 8-1 vote June 20, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right of the U.S. Catholic Conference to challenge subpoenas brought by Abortion Rights Mobilization (ARM). The decision sent the case back to a lower court for further action.

The decision continues to spare the USCC and its twin agency, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, from fines of \$50,000 a day each for non-compliance with the subpoenas, but does not end the underlying court case.

In that suit, the abortion-rights group seeks to force the Internal Revenue Service to revoke the tax exemption of virtually every Catholic Church entity in the United States for alleged church violations of laws and regulations forbidding political activity by tax-exempt groups.

As part of the nearly eight-year-old case, ARM had subpoenaed numerous church documents on pro-life activities.

The USCC and NCCB refused to comply and said they should have the right to challenge federal court jurisdiction in the proceeding even though they were not direct parties to the lawsuit.

Bishop Vaughan arrested again

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. (NC) — New York Auxiliary Bishop Austin B. Vaughan was arrested for the second time in six weeks after participating in a June 11 demonstration at a Dobbs Ferry clinic where abortions are performed.

Police arrested 174 people, including the bishop and at least six priests, after about 250 protesters blocked two entrances to the Women's Medical Pavilion in Dobbs Ferry. The protests was part of the ongoing "Operation Rescue," which has vowed to shut down abortion clinics, at least for several hours, using large numbers of protesters to prevent access to the facilities.

Archdiocese divests stocks

St. Paul, Minn. (NC) — The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis announced May 31 that it is divesting its endowment portfolio of stocks in companies engaged in business in South Africa. The action was taken at the recommendation of the archdiocesan Investment Advisory Committee, the archdiocesan Investment Ethics Committee and the Commission on Social Justice. The U.S. Catholic Conference, public policy arm of the U.S. bishops, announced in June 1987 that it would sell all its stocks in firms doing business in South Africa.

Local priest fills NCCB post

Washington (NC) — Vincentian Father John W. Gouldrick, professor of religious studies at Niagara University in Buffalo, has been named executive director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities. A native of Victor, Father Gouldrick has taught medical and sexual ethics and has served as ethicist to the Medical Ethics Committee at Good Samaritan Hospital, Pottsville, Pa. He succeeds Father Edward M. Bryce, who served as director for 10 years before returning to his home Diocese of Pittsburgh last February.

Bishops urge aid for homeless

Washington (NC) — The religious community wants to help end the "terrible injustice" of homelessness in the United States, but government also must resume doing its share, two Catholic bishops told a congressional panel June 15. At the same time, the U.S. Catholic Conference released identical letters to the 1988 presidential candidates and to President Reagan, urging them to make "specific proposals to deal with the tragic reality" of homelessness and a shortfall in housing for the poor.

The letters to the presidential candidates, signed by Bishop Sullivan, echoed the views expressed in the testimony and in a June 2 statement by the USCC Administrative Board on homelessness and housing.

Vatican calls Lefebvre decision 'schismatic'

By John Thavis

Vatican City (NC) — Suspended Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, saying he needed future leaders for his self-styled "traditionalist" religious society, announced he would ordain four bishops at the end of June — an act the Vatican immediately defined as "schismatic."

Archbishop Lefebvre's announcement June 15 and the Vatican's reaction the next day marked the end of a dialogue aimed at regularizing his group. The Vatican revealed it had been willing to make several important concessions to the society, including the naming of a bishop from its membership.

The Vatican also appealed directly to the clerical and lay followers of the 82-year-old archbishop, saying that "all measures will be taken to guarantee their identity" if they "rethink their position" and decide to stay in the Church.

The bishops' conferences of France, Switzerland and Germany expressed disappointment at Archbishop Lefebvre's hardline position and urged him not to ordain the bishops against Vatican orders — a step that would bring automatic excommunication for himself and those he ordained.

Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said he was surprised at Archbishop Lefebvre's rejection of the Vatican offer and said the Vatican "could not have made more efforts" at reconciliation.

At the Vatican, meanwhile, a key figure in the reconciliation attempt, Cardinal Edouard Gagnon, said a Vatican commission might be set up to look after the concerns of "traditionalists" who have difficulty accepting changes brought by the Second Vatican Council.

While Pope John Paul II did not immediately comment on Archbishop Lefebvre's announcement, he has expressed in recent months his keen interest in a reconciliation. Vatican sources said Archbishop Lefebvre's decision would be a grave disappointment to the pope, who now faces the prospect of a schism — a formal separation of a church movement from the communion of the Church.

Archbishop Lefebvre was suspended from his ministry in 1976 by Pope Paul VI, after ordaining priests against Vatican orders. Church approval for his society had been removed in 1975.

In announcing the bishops' ordinations for June 30, Archbishop Lefebvre left no doubt that his Priestly Society of St. Pius X remained opposed to several main teachings of the Second Vatican Council: those on ecumenism, religious liberty and liturgy. Reading from a letter he wrote June 2 to the pope, the archbishop said his society wanted to "guard against the spirit of Vatican II." He asserted that the current "false ecumenism" was "leading the Church to its ruin."

The pope wrote back on June 9, expressing his "deep distress" and sternly warning the prelate against ordaining bishops.

"I exhort you, venerable brother, to give up your plan which, if realized, could only appear as a schismatic act, whose inevitable theological and canonical consequences are known to you," the pope said.

The Vatican made public the texts of both letters, along with a statement summarizing the delicate negotiations between the two sides. The statement revealed that a draft agreement, signed by Archbishop Lefebvre but later repudiated by him, would have given his society a number of liturgical and organizational concessions.

Under the agreement, the group was to have been established as a society of "pontifical right" — with limited control by local bishops. The plan foresaw the creation of a Vatican commission to oversee relations among the society, the Roman Curia and bishops. It allowed the society to use pre-Vatican II liturgical books: Finally, it proposed — subject to the pope's approval — the naming of a bishop chosen from among members of the society.

On the other hand, the draft agreement called for the archbishop and his society to pledge fidelity to the pope and the Church, to accept the council's statement on the Church's teaching authority, to recognize the validity of the post-Vatican II Mass and sacramental rites, and to adopt "an attitude of study and communication" regarding the specific conciliar teachings and policies they had rejected.

The protocol agreement, signed May 5, broke down when Archbishop Lefebvre insisted on ordaining a bishop June 30. Later, he raised the number of bishops needed to four, and said his members must have a majority on the Vatican's oversight commission.



Negotiations between Vatican officials and traditionalist Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, shown above at a 1984 confirmation in Santiago, Chile, broke down last week. The French archbishop rejected a Vatican proposal that offered several concessions, and announced he would ordain four bishops June 30 without Vatican permission. The ordinations would mean automatic excommunication for the archbishop and the newly ordained bishops.

The Vatican, represented by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the doctrinal congregation, rejected Archbishop Lefebvre's demands, but agreed to the ordination of one bishop as early as Aug. 15, at the close of the Marian year. That was not enough to satisfy the archbishop.

In his announcement June 15 at his headquarters in Ecône, Switzerland, Archbishop Lefebvre said he would name four of his priests as bishops:

- British-born Father Richard Williamson, 48, superior of a traditionalist seminary in Ridgefield, Conn.
- French Father Bernard Tissier de Mallerais, 42, secretary general of the society.
- Father Bernard Fellay, 31, of Valaisan, Switzerland, treasurer of the society.
- Father Alphonso de Galarreta, 30, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, district superior for South America.

In an interview published in the French daily *Le Figaro* June 17, Archbishop Lefebvre said he had chosen two candidates from the Americas because he feared a "communist invasion of Europe," which would immobilize the society's European leadership.

Cardinal Gagnon, who last fall made a papally mandated visit to Ecône as a first step toward reconciliation, said he thought the Vatican would go ahead and set up a commission to "look after the interests" of Archbishop Lefebvre's followers, despite the failed agreement.

In an interview with National Catholic News Service, the cardinal said he thought the concessions offered Archbishop Lefebvre would be offered to groups that had previously worked "alongside" him, but that now wished to remain in the Church.

Cardinal Gagnon said the reconciliation effort was always aimed beyond the Priestly Society of St. Pius X.

"The idea was to start with this group and then extend it to others," he said.

In a separate interview with Vatican Radio, Cardinal Gagnon said he estimated that about 500,000 Catholics around the world use the "services" of Archbishop Lefebvre's society.

"They cannot be called followers of

Monsignor Lefebvre in all his ideas, but they go to his priests for one service or another — confessions, spiritual directions or the education of their children in the faith. So it's a big movement," Cardinal Gagnon said.

In the United States, fewer than 5,000 people worship regularly at the 95 missions operated by the society, according to a society official.

The number of Archbishop Lefebvre's followers in the United States is "quite small, minuscule even," Msgr. Daniel F. Hoye, general secretary of the bishops' conference in Washington, said June 17.

Archbishop May said the same day in a telephone interview that Archbishop Lefebvre's decision poses a problem for Catholics who have attended services run by the society, while still considering themselves Roman Catholics.

"They are going to have to make their choice now," Archbishop May said. He said that if Archbishop Lefebvre goes through with the ordinations of bishops, "he's clearly outside of the Church."

Archbishop May noted the possibility that Archbishop Lefebvre might change his mind before the end of June. Vatican officials, including Cardinal Gagnon, said that was unlikely.

In comments made after his announcement, Archbishop Lefebvre also indicated he is not rethinking the decision. In an interview with the Italian magazine *Trenta Giorni* (30 Days), the archbishop explained that if he had accepted the Vatican reconciliation offer, his organization would have split.

"The seminarians would have split even on the simple proposal to join a procession with modernist bishops," he said. Excerpts of the interview were released by the magazine in advance of publication, expected in July.

Archbishop Lefebvre said that by defying the Vatican and ordaining bishops, "now we are stronger, with an organization that is intact, strong and well-structured." He said he hoped that in "four or five years" the Vatican would "come to an agreement with us."

Contributing to this story was Cindy Wooden in Washington.